

Message Text

PAGE 01 LIBREV 01633 211117Z

10

ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 OMB-01 EB-07 AID-05 COME-00 OPIC-06 XMB-04

AS-01 (ISO) W

----- 095715

R 210940Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8198

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

UNCLAS LIBREVILLE 1633

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, EFIN, GB

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT BONGOS INDEPENDENCE DAY SPEECH

1. PRESIDENT BONGO USED TRADITIONAL OCCASION OF GABONS INDEPENDENCE DAY CEREMONIES AUGUST 17 TO MAKE MAJOR POLICY SPEECH. SINCE SPEECH DELIVERED IN REMOTE NYANGA PROVINCE WHERE INDEPENDENCE WAS CELEBRATED THIS YEAR, FULL TEXTS NOT CARRIED IN LIBREVILLE PRESS UNTIL AUGUST 19.

2. VIEWED OVERALL, SPEECH IS MODERATE IN TONE AND STRONGLY ECONOMIC IN SUBSTANCE, WITH SPECIAL EMPHASES ON FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC DEBT MANAGEMENT. BONGO BEGAN REMARKS BY TRACING DEVELOPMENT OF 1976 AS YEAR OF "RENEWED RENOVATION". HE RECALLED HIS MARCH 11 RENOVATION DAY SPEECH, WHEN HE DEMANDED "NEW DEDICATION AND PROFESSIONAL DISCIPLINE" BY GABONESE AND ATTACKED EXCESSES OF "UNTAMED CAPITALISM" PRACTICED BY FOREIGN INTERESTS. HOWEVER, AUGUST 17 REMARKS, IN CONTRAST TO MARCH SPEECH, ARE LOW KEY AND LARGELY DEDICATED TO SUMMING UP STATE OF ECONOMY AND REPORTING PROGRESS IN COUNTRY'S MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS.

3. ON POLITICAL FRONT, PRESIDENT NOTED THAT GABON HAD UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 LIBREV 01633 211117Z

CONSIDERABLY BORADENDED ITS INTERNATIONAL CONTACTS OVER LAST TWELVE MONTHS THROUGH OPENING OF NEW DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS (SECGEN AT FONMIN RECENTLY TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT GABON NOW HAS NEARLY 50 MISSIONS OVERSEAS) AND THROUGH

HIS OWN EXTENSIVE PROGRAM OF STATE VISITS. HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT LIBREVILLE IS GAINING STATURE WITHIN AFRICA AS EVIDENCED BY GROWING NUMBER OF INTER- AFRICAN ORGANIZATIONS HEADQUARTERED HERE, BY FREQUENT VISITS OF OTHER AFRICAN LEADERS AND BY OAU SUMMIT CONFERENCE THAT WILL BE HELD HERE NEXT SUMMER.

4. ADDRESSING ECONOMY, PRESIDENT HIGHLIGHTED FAVORABLE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS PICYURE WHERE 1975 EXPORTS OF ABOUT DOLS 800 MILLION DOUBLED IMPORTS AND PROVIDED SUBSTANTIAL SURPLUS. HE NOTED THAT FRANCE WAS STILL LARGEST IMPORTER OF GABONS EXPORTS WITH 37 PCT OF TOTAL AND QUOTED FIGURES THAT PUT US IN SECOND PLACE WITH 18 PERCENT (LARGELY CRUDE OIL). BONGO SAID THAT FUTURE FOR ECONOMIC EXPANSION LOOKED BRIGHT WITH NEW OIL DISCOVERIES PERMITTING HOPE THAT PRESENT PRODUCTION LEVELS (12 MILLION TONS/YEAR) CAN BE CONTINUED IN FUTURE YEARS.

5. FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT, BONGO SAID THAT EMPHASIS WOOULD BE GIVEN TO BUILDING UP TRANSFORMATION INDUSTRIES TO ADD VALUE TO COUNTRYS EXPORTS OF OIL, WOOD, MANGANESE AND IRON. MAJOR TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE WOULD CONTINUE TO RECIEVE LARGE PART OF INVESTMENT BUDGET WITH TRANSGABON RAILROAD TAKING LIONS SHARE. NEW EMPHASIS WOULD BE GIVEN OVER FIVE YEAR PLANNING PERIOD (1976-1980) TO AGRICULTURE TO MAKE GABON SELF SUFFICEINT IN FOOD PRODUCTION. SOCIAL SERVICES WOULD NOT BE NEGLECTED, SAID PRESIDENT, WHO CITED EXAMPLES OF PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS IN HEALTH CARE FACILITIES AND SECONDARY AND HIGHER EDUCATION.

6. IN SPITE OF BASICALLY STRONG ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL POSITION, BONGO POINTED OUT, INCREASING GOVERNMENT COSTS DUE TO EXPANSION OF SERVICES AND INFLATION WILL REDUCE AMOUNTS AVAILABLE FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. AS RESULT, HE SAID, ALL PROJECT HAVE BEEN "PRIORITIZED" AND ONLY MOST ESSENTIAL WILL BE COMPLETED OVER NEXT FOUR YEARS. "1977 WILL BE THE YEAR OF AUSTERITY", HE AFFIRMED, AND UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 LIBREV 01633 211117Z

ADDED THAT 1977, 1978 AND 1979Y WILL BE CONSECRATED TO CONSOLIDATING AND REDUCING PUBLIC DEBT. PRESIDENT GAVE SPECIAL EMPHASIS NEAR END OF SPEECH TO PUBLIC DEBT MANAGEMENT, APPARENTLY IN ANSWER TO RECENT CRITICISMS IN EUEOPEAN FINANCIAL CIRCLES(DETAILS BEING REPORTED SEPTTEL).

7. COMMENT: BONGO GAVE IMPRESSION OF CAHRIMAN OF THE BOARD MAKING ANNUAL ECONOMIC REPORT TO STOCKHOLDERS IN AUGUST 17 REMARKS, WHICH IN BOTH TONE AND SUBSTANCE ARE IN DECIDED CONTRAST TO EARLIER, MORE POLITICAL SPEECHES. WHILE SPEECH NOT LIKELY TO GENERATE MUCH ENTHUSIASM ON HOME FRONT, CONSERVATIVE APPROACH TOWARDS ECONOMIC

DEVELOPMENT AND DEBT MANAGEMENT SHOULD PROVE REASSURING
TO FOREIGN LENDERS AND INVESTORS. STEIGMAN

UNCLASSIFIED

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 15 SEP 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS, SPEECHES, ECONOMIC PROGRAMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976LIBREV01633
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 NA
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D760321-0073
From: LIBREVILLE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t197608103/baaaesnm.tel
Line Count: 113
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: cahillha
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 MAR 2004 by ReddocGW>; APPROVED <08 OCT 2004 by cahillha>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESIDENT BONGOS INDEPENDENCE DAY SPEECH
TAGS: PINT, EFIN, GB, (BONGO, ALBERT BERNARD)
To: STATE INFO PARIS
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006